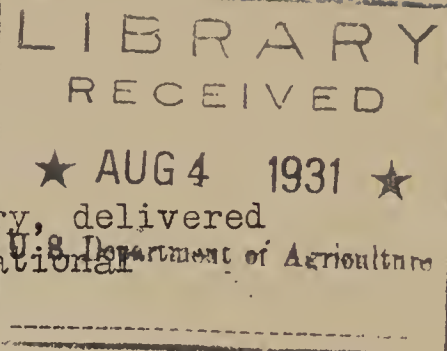


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THE GARDEN CALENDAR



A radio talk by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered through WRC and 42 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, Tuesday, July 21, 1931.

Hello Everybody.-- Well folks, it is still pretty hot here in Washington but we are so near the seashore that it is no trouble at all to motor to the beach for a week-end, and that is just what I did last Saturday and Sunday.

My trip to the ocean front last Friday evening took me through that wonderful Eastern Shore country of Maryland and I saw beautiful fields of wheat, several threshing outfits in operation, also two or three combines. There are excellent fields of corn, oats, sweet potatoes, tomatoes for the canneries, watermelons, cucumbers and cantaloupes and everything looking fine. My interest, however, was more in the excellent home gardens that I saw on practically every one of those Eastern Shore farms. There were Lima beans, snap beans, sweet corn, potatoes, sweetpotatoes, tomatoes, cabbage, beets, carrots and many more of the good substantial food crops. I'll tell you those Eastern Shore folks are not overlooking anything when it comes to providing plenty to eat. There are flocks of chickens, turkeys, ducks and geese; fine cows, pigs and sheep in the pastures, but everywhere those good home gardens.

Now do not misunderstand me for this is not a boost for the State in which I now make my home but this is another appeal to all of you who live on farms to provide plenty to eat at home. In this time of depressed prices of farm products, the lowest in many years, and our buying power accordingly reduced, it is all the more important that we should have a good garden and grow plenty to eat. Most of us can get along on a pretty narrow margin for clothing but let the food supply run short and it is another story.

It is not too late in most sections to plant a fall garden, in fact it is just the time to make a start for a fall garden in the Southern States. It is, however, too late for much planting in the more northern sections of New England or the Great Lakes region. In the latitude of Washington, D. C. sweet corn, snap beans, bush lima beans, late cabbage, beets, okra, spinach, turnips, broccoli and several other vegetables can still be planted. Most of these vegetables will not only come to maturity for fall use but a number of them can be stored for winter use. You folks living in the cotton-growing States don't have to worry much about storage of vegetables except in the case of sweet potatoes, and, by the way, the matter of storing sweet potatoes is mighty important. When you consider that about one-half of the sweet potatoes stored in pits or banks rot in storage and are a complete loss, it would seem desirable that more attention be given to the proper storage of this important southern food crop. The curing and storing of sweet potatoes ~~in houses~~ has long passed the experimental stage and it is now possible to keep sweet potatoes almost perfectly. We would be glad to send you a copy of Farmer's Bulletin No. 1442-F on the Storage of Sweet Potatoes.

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Losses of white potatoes in storage in the northern States are not so great yet thousands of bushels of potatoes are lost every year from freezing in banks and in unprotected storage cellars. It would pay to provide better facilities for storing the home supply of potatoes.

There is a rather large crop of apples in most sections this year and folks are liable to become just a little careless about taking care of the crop and I believe it will pay to provide suitable storage facilities. When I was a boy on the farm there were no cold storage warehouses, but by good management of our storage cellar we were seldom without fresh apples from the time the early summer apples began to ripen until the last of the Baldwins and the Russets were used along about the first of the following May. It is remarkable indeed how well apples can be kept in Natural storage by means of well insulated walls and plenty of ventilation at times when the outside temperature is lower than that of the storage room or house. We can supply you with a copy of a very good bulletin on the home storage of vegetables, it is Farmer's Bulletin No. 879-F. I might mention that the principles involved in the storage of both fruits and vegetables are much the same except certain vegetables like onions and cabbage should not be kept in the same room with fruits.

Now I did not start out with the intention of giving a talk on the storage of fruits and vegetables, however, the matter of storage is just ahead of us. The main point that I want to drive home to you today is that it is not too late in most sections to plant a fall garden and to grow an abundant supply of vegetables for fall use and for storage. With the general depression and low prices that are being paid for the products of our farms we may be facing a pretty tight winter financially and one of the important ways for us to safeguard our comfort and well-being is to provide plenty of good things to eat right at home. I have been severely criticised for my advice to farmers to have a good home garden and to produce the major portion of their living at home on the grounds that this curtailed the market for fruits and vegetables produced by commercial growers, but I stand by my guns and firmly believe the policy of living at home and boarding at the same place to be sound, furthermore, if we as farmers do not have the cash or credit with which to purchase our supplies what shall it profit us if we go hungry. Yours for better times on the farm and well laden dinner tables.